



US Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Bureau of Indian Affairs

# The Oklahoma Field Office RMP Newsletter

Issue I, November 2013

## Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Oklahoma Field Office (OFO) in cooperation with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Eastern Oklahoma and Southern Plains Regional Offices, is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), to guide the management of BLM administered public resources (BLM-administered surface lands and federal minerals) and restricted, trust, and tribal minerals and lands under the jurisdiction of the BIA within the states of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas.

The EIS will result in a BLM Resource Management Plan (RMP), which creates the management framework for the OFO. The RMP/EIS will be prepared as a dynamic and flexible plan to allow management to reflect the changed needs of the planning area. The RMP will replace the existing 1991 Kansas RMP, 1994 Oklahoma RMP, as amended, and 1996 Texas RMP, as amended.

The need for the OFO RMP is to respond to new policies including but not limited to energy, demand for limited resources, appropriate protection of sensitive resources, increases in conflict between competing resource values and land uses, and other issues that have surfaced since approval of the existing RMPs. The overall objective of the OFO RMP planning effort is to provide a collaborative planning approach that assists the BLM in updating the management decisions of the current RMPs. As such, early public involvement is crucial to identify various RMP-level issues that should be addressed through the process. The scoping period provides the public with an opportunity to learn about the OFO RMP, to help identify issues and concerns to be addressed in the EIS, and to provide input used in developing alternatives.

The final RMP will identify desired outcomes, future conditions to be maintained or achieved, and specify uses or resource allocations that are allowable, restricted, or prohibited, including any restrictions needed to meet desired outcomes. Public input on issues related to these decisions is essential and encouraged.

## OFO Planning Area

The planning area encompasses 411,585 square miles (263 million acres) across the states of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas, and contains a population of over 32 million people. The planning area comprises federal, state, and

private lands, as well as Native American reservations, hundreds of counties, and thousands of municipalities. The decision area is only the surface land and subsurface mineral estate within the planning area for which the BLM or BIA have authority to make land use and management decisions. The BLM decision area is comprised of 104,000 acres of BLM-administered surface lands, 593,000 acres of split-estate land (private land with federal mineral interests), and an additional 5,270,000 acres of federal mineral estate on lands managed by other federal agencies. The BIA decision areas include 621,696 acres and 479,015 acres for BIA Eastern Oklahoma and BIA Southern Plains, respectively.



The Oklahoma Field Office planning area encompasses Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas.

## What is a Resource Management Plan?

An RMP, similar to a county master plan, is a land use plan that describes broad multiple-use guidance for managing public lands administered by the BLM. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act directs the BLM to develop such land use plans and to provide for appropriate uses of public lands. Decisions in land use plans guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions.

The BLM land use (or RMP) planning process, explained in 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1600, BLM 1601 Manual, and BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1), falls within the framework of the NEPA environmental analysis and decision making process described in the Council of Environmental Quality regulations of 40 CFR 1500-1508, the Department of the Interior NEPA Manual (516 DM 17), and BLM NEPA Handbook H-1790-1.

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## How Can You Participate?

Public involvement is an integral part of preparing the OFO RMP/EIS and BIA EIS. This public scoping period gives the public and other interested agencies and organizations the opportunity to provide comments on issues to be addressed and methods to be used in the EIS before the BLM and BIA begin drafting it. The official scoping period began with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register on July 26, 2013, and will continue for 190 days (ending on January 31, 2014). During the scoping period, the BLM and BIA will host 17 public open houses across the planning area. Notices directing the public to the RMP/EIS website, which has information on these meetings, will be published in local newspapers.

The public is formally invited and encouraged to participate in the planning process for the RMP/EIS during the public scoping period. Some ways you can participate are:

- ✓ Attending one or more of the open house meetings to learn about the project and planning process and to meet BLM and BIA representatives;
- ✓ Reviewing the progress of the RMP/EIS on-line at the OFO RMP/EIS website at: <http://www.blm.gov/nm/oktrmp>. The website will be updated with information, documents, and announcements throughout the RMP/EIS preparation;
- ✓ Completing an online comment form on the website;
- ✓ Mailing or emailing a comment to the RMP/EIS address or email address (see below); and
- ✓ Joining the OFO RMP mailing list in order to receive future mailings and information, by:
  - E-mailing us at [BLM\\_NM\\_OKT\\_RMP@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_NM_OKT_RMP@blm.gov); or
  - Contacting Laurence Levesque at (918) 621-4136.

## Mark Your Calendar! Upcoming Open Houses



Each meeting will start with an open house at 6 pm that will be followed by a presentation from 6:15 to 6:45. A brief discussion session will follow. The remainder of the meeting time will be for submission of oral comments, browsing the information stations that will be set up, having conversations with BLM and BIA staff, and for preparing written comments for those who seek to do so at the meeting.

### **Monday, November 18, 2013**

Holiday Inn Express  
3333 Williams Ave., Woodward, OK

### **Tuesday, November 19, 2013**

Holiday Inn Express  
3825 E Main St., Weatherford, OK

### **Wednesday, November 20, 2013**

Best Western PLUS - Saddlebrook Inn and  
Conference Center  
4300 SW 3rd St., Oklahoma City, OK

### **Monday, December 2, 2013**

Buckley Public Library  
408 Dewey Ave., Poteau, OK

### **Tuesday, December 3, 2013**

Holiday Inn Express  
701 Holiday Dr., Tahlequah, OK

### **Wednesday, December 4, 2013**

Holiday Inn Express  
1811 Peaceable Rd., McAlester, OK

### **Tuesday, December 10, 2013**

Holiday Inn Express  
209 SE 8th St., Lawton, OK

### **Wednesday, December 11, 2013**

Courtyard Wichita Falls  
3800 Tarry Street, Wichita Falls, TX

### **Thursday, December 12, 2013**

Fort Worth Public Library  
4001 Library Ln., Fort Worth, TX

### **Tuesday, December 17, 2013**

Looscan Neighborhood Library  
2510 Willowick Rd, Houston, TX

### **Wednesday, December 18, 2013**

Holiday Inn Express  
120 Southpoint Dr., Livingston, TX

### **Thursday, December 19, 2013**

Holiday Inn Express  
4404 S 1st St., Lufkin, TX

### **Tuesday, January 7, 2014**

Courtyard Marriott Salina  
3020 Riffel Dr., Salina, KS

### **Wednesday, January 8, 2014**

Liberal Memorial Library  
519 N. Kansas Ave., Liberal, KS

### **Thursday, January 9, 2014**

Amarillo Public Library  
413 SE 4th Ave., Amarillo, TX

### **Tuesday, January 14, 2014**

Doubletree Downtown  
616 W. 7th St., Tulsa, OK

### **Wednesday, January 15, 2014**

Pawhuska City Library  
1801 Lynn Ave., Pawhuska, OK

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## Preliminary Planning Issues

Planning issues are conflicts or concerns over a resource management topic that is well defined and entails alternative actions or decisions. Based on the lands and resources that we manage, the BLM and BIA have identified categories of issues, or issue statements (see box below). We expect most public issues and concerns to fall within one of these statements; however, we do not presume that they are all-encompassing. The issue statements may be revised based on the comments we receive, and new issue statements may be added. The BLM requests your comments on these or other issues on BLM-administered lands, split-estate lands, and federal mineral estate within the planning area. The BIA requests your comments on issues relating to Native American-allotted or tribal minerals, lands, and other resources within the planning area.

**Issue 1.** *Restoring Ecological Health*

**Issue 2.** *Air*

**Issue 3.** *Water*

**Issue 4.** *Cultural Resources, Native American Concerns and Paleontology Resources*

**Issue 5.** *Visual Resource Management*

**Issue 6.** *Special Status Species*

**Issue 7.** *Fish and Wildlife*

**Issue 8.** *Wild Horses and Burros*

**Issue 9.** *Fire Management*

**Issue 10.** *Livestock Grazing*

**Issue 11.** *Recreation and Visitor Services*

**Issue 12.** *Lands and Realty*

**Issue 13.** *Mineral Resources (includes Oil, Gas, Geothermal, Coal, Saleable, and Solid Leasable except coal), and Locatable*

**Issue 14.** *Hazardous Materials*

**Issue 15.** *Special Designations (such as ACECs)*

**Issue 16.** *Renewable Resources*

**Issue 17.** *Socio-Economics*

**Issue 18.** *Environmental Justice*

**Issue 19.** *Comprehensive Travel and Transportation Management*

## Preliminary Planning Criteria

Planning criteria guide development of the RMP/EIS by helping define the decision space; they are generally based on applicable laws, BLM Director and New Mexico State Director guidance, BIA Eastern Oklahoma and Southern Plains Regional Directors guidance, and the results of public and governmental participation (43 CFR 1610.4-2). The BLM and BIA developed preliminary planning criteria to set the sideboards for focused planning of the OFO RMP/EIS and to guide decision making by topic. A selection of the planning criteria developed by OFO are listed below:

- Existing laws, regulations, and BLM and BIA policies
- Valid existing rights
- Plans, programs, and policies of other federal, state, and local governments, and Native American Tribes
- Public input
- Quantity and quality of non-commodity resource values
- Future needs and demands for existing or potential resource commodities and values
- Past and present use of public and adjacent lands
- Environmental effects, including effects on wildlife, cultural resources, and paleontology
- Social and economic values
- Environmental justice
- Public welfare and safety



The Red River is a popular recreation area for Oklahomans and Texans alike. Portions of these lands are managed by the BLM and also have values as critical habitat for threatened and endangered species.

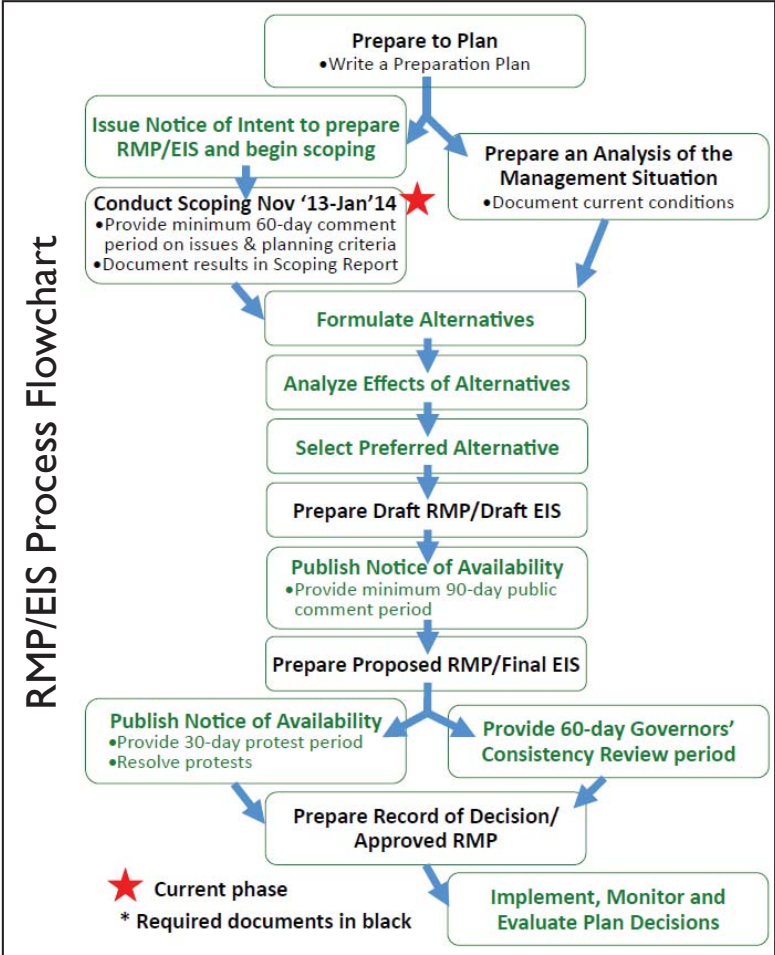
July 2013	November 2013— January 2014	Summer 2014	Fall 2016	Summer 2017	Fall 2017
NOI Published in <i>Federal Register</i>	Public Scoping	Formulate Alternatives and Prepare Draft RMP/ Draft EIS	Draft RMP/Draft EIS Available for 90-day Public Review & Comment	Proposed RMP/Final EIS Available for 30- day Public Review & Protest	Record of Decision & Approved RMP

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## Commonly Used Acronyms

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOI	Notice of Intent
OFO	Oklahoma Field Office
RMP	Resource Management Plan



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**How to contact us**

If you have questions about the RMP, please contact:

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\*Acting as contracted agent for the Bureau of Land Management

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